

THE BUTTERFLIES OF MURRAY ISLAND, TORRES STRAIT, QUEENSLAND

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Abstract

Butterfly species collected on Murray Island are listed and comments made on the variability and status of some of these. *Euploea batesii belia* Waterhouse & Lyell is shown to be a junior synonym of *E. b. resarta* Butler and *Taenaris artemis zetes* Brooks a junior synonym of *T. a. jamesi* Butler. It is also suggested that *Euploea core* on Murray forms part of a clinal variation through the Torres Strait Islands and that *E. algea amycus* appears to form part of this cline. *Hypolimnas antilope* (Cramer) is recorded within Australian limits for the first time; *Jamides amarauge* Druce is recorded from Murray Island for the first time.

Introduction

Murray Island is an extinct volcano in far eastern Torres Strait, lying 9°55'S and 144°03'E, which is approximately 135 km southeast of the Papua New Guinea coast and 195 km from the tip of Cape York Peninsula.

Approximately half of the island is covered with grass. Most of the remaining half is overgrown native gardens containing many exotic plants. Little of the original vegetation remains in an undisturbed state, land clearing and annual burning being responsible for this situation.

Lying 45 km north-east of Murray Island, and in a direct line with the closest point of the Papua New Guinea coast, is Darnley Island. Because of the isolation of Murray Island little collecting has been undertaken and material is poorly represented in collections. Two collecting trips were made by the writer, one in 1984 between 20 April and 4 May and the other during the same period in 1985.

A total of fifty species were taken. Five specimens of *Hypolimnas antilope* (Cramer) represent the first taken within Australian limits. *Jamides amarauge* Druce is recorded from Murray Island for the first time. Eight species recorded from Darnley Island have not been taken on Murray Island. Most of these are probably vagrants from the Papua New Guinea mainland which have not reached as far as Murray Island.

Examination of the material collected has called into question the validity of some races and of one species previously recognised for the island.

Euploea batesii resarta Butler, 1876

Euploea batesii belia Waterhouse & Lyell, 1914; *Butterflies of Australia*: 22. N. syn.

The race *belia* was erected on eight specimens. *Euploea batesii* is a common and variable species on Murray Island and there is no justification for the race *belia*. The 50 specimens taken show the continuous variation found in *resarta* (Fig. 1). *Euploea batesii resarta* is found throughout New Guinea and the Louisiade and D'Entrecasteaux archipelagos. D'Abrera (1977) states that it is "A very variable race".

Euploea core corinna (W. S. Macleay, 1826)

Euploea core on Murray Is. appears to represent part of a clinal variation and the variability between specimens seems sufficient to encompass specimens designated *Euploea algea amycus* Miskin. A large series taken on Murray Is. show specimens resembling *core* and *algea* but the great majority display intermediate characters (Fig. 2).

With respect to *core* Ackery and Vane-Wright (1984) state they can offer no autapomorphies to define this well known butterfly. They describe *algea* as a polytypic cladospecies—based on a single doubtful autapomorphy. Their key separates the two on the male sex brand being larger in *algea* than in *core*, with the additional problem that some specimens are not clearly one or the other. This is certainly the case on Murray Is., where the extent of the white spotting is equally variable.

Taenaris artemis jamesi Butler, 1876

Taenaris artemis zetes Brooks, 1944, *Proc. R. ent. Soc. Lond.* (B)13: 114. N. syn.

Three specimens of this species taken on Murray Island cannot be separated from specimens taken on Darnley Island. All three lack the larger ocelli and the additional small ocellus at the costa upon which the race *zetes* is based.

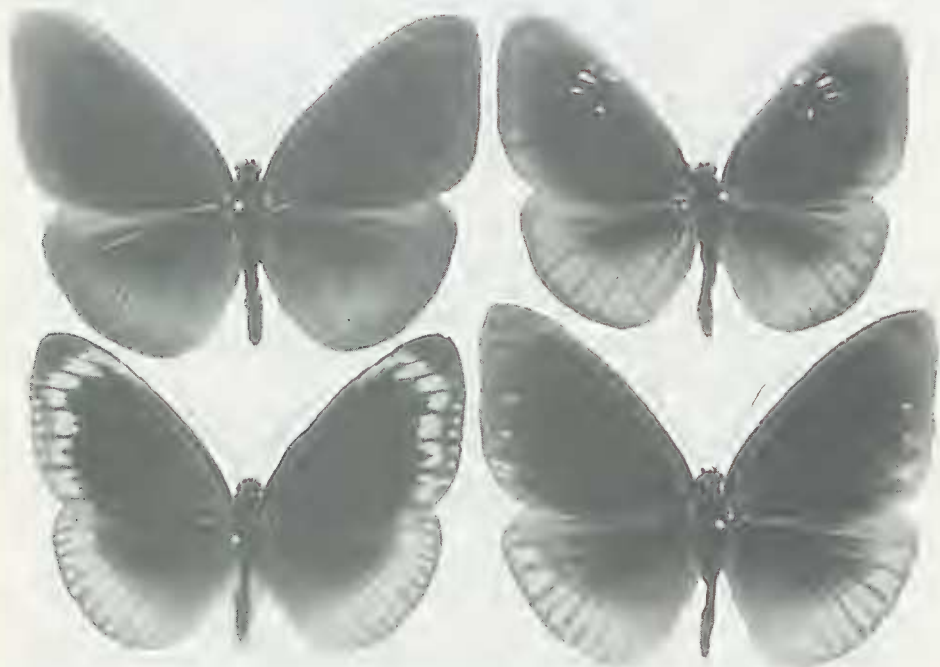


Fig. 1. Variation in *Euploea batesii resarta* from Murray Island.



Fig. 2. Variation in *Euploea core corinna* from Murray Island: the top four specimens are males; the 4 bottom specimens females.

List of species collected on Murray Island

HESPERIIDAE

Hasora chromus chromus (Cramer)
Badamia exclamatonis (Fabricius)
Notocrypta waigensis proserpina (Butler)
Ocybadistes ardea heterobathra (Lower)
Suniasa sunias rektivatta (Mabille)
Telicota augias krefftii (W. S. Macleay)
Cephrenes trichopepla (Lower)
Borbo cinnara (Wallace)
Pelopidas agna dingo Evans
Pelopidas lyelli lyelli (Rothschild)

PAPILIONIDAE

Graphium macfarlanei macfarlanei (Butler)
Graphium eurypylus (Linnaeus)
Papilio aegaeus ormenus Guérin-Ménéville
Papilio fuscus indicatus Butler
Papilio ambrax ambrax Boisduval
Cressida cressida cressida (Fabricius)
Atrophaneura polydorus queenslandicus
 (Rothschild)

PIERIDAE

Catopsila pomona pomona (Fabricius)
Eurema hecabe phoebus (Butler)
Cepora perimale latilimbata (Butler)

NYMPHALIDAE

Danaus hamatus hamatus (W. S. Macleay)
Euploea core corinna (W. S. Macleay)
Euploea tulliolus tulliolus (Fabricius)

Euploea batesii resarta Butler
Melanitis leda bankia (Fabricius)
Mycalesis sirius sirius (Fabricius)
Mycalesis terminus terminus (Fabricius)
Mycalesis perseus perseus (Fabricius)
Orsotriaena medus moira Waterh. & Lyell
Xois arctoa arctoa (Fabricius)
Taenaris artemis jamesi Butler
Doleschalia bisaltide australis Felder
Hypolimnas bolina nerina (Fabricius)
Hypolimnas misippus (Linnaeus)
Hypolimnas alimena lamina Fruhstorfer
Hypolimnas antilope (Cramer)¹
Yoma sabina parva (Butler)
Junonia orithya albicincta Butler

LYCAENIDAE

Athene seltuttus affinus (Waterh. & Lyell)
Catopyrops ancyra mysia (Waterh. & Lyell)
Danis cyanea arinia (Oberthur)
Jamides phaseli (Mathew)²
Jamides amarauge Druce³
Jamidea sp.⁴
Catochrysops panormus platissa
 (Herrich-Schäffer)
Lampides boeticus (Linnaeus)
Zizeeria karsandra (Moore)
Zizina labradus labradon Waterh. & Lyell
Famegana alsulus alsulus (Herrich-Schäffer)
Euchrysops cnejus cnidus Waterh. & Lyell

1. Previously unrecorded from within Australian limits.

2. A large series taken agree with the comment of Johnson (1983) concerning Darnley Island specimens. They differ from mainland specimens in brightness and width of the dark margins on the wings, but some resembling mainland specimens were taken with specimens ranging to pale blue.

3. Previously unrecorded from Murray Is.

4. These are the same as a pair of *Jamides* sp. taken on Darnley by Johnson (1983).

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